

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 030980

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: PROPOSED CALLS ON PRESIDENTS FRANGIE AND KARAME

REF: BEIRUT 1224

1. BELIEVE IN YOUR MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT FRANGIE AND
PREMIER KARAME YOU SHOULD TRY TO CONCENTRATE ON THE TWO
TOPICS MENTIONED REFTEL: (A) OUR GREAT SATISFACTION
THAT POLITICAL AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED, AND OUR HOPE FOR
ITS SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION; AND (B) GALLAGHER AND DYKES.
WE HAVE NO OBJECTION TO YOUR RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO
OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY TWO LEADERS, BUT IN REMARKS YOU
VOLUNTEER ON YOUR OWN INITIATIVE WE TRUST YOU WILL MAKE
STRONGEST POSSIBLE POINT OF OUR CONCERN FOR RELEASE OF
GALLAGHER AND DYKES.

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2. SINCE THESE WILL BE YOUR FIRST MEETINGS AS CHARGE

WITH FRANGIE AND KARAME, WE BELIEVE YOU SHOULD BE RATHER FORMAL BUT SHOULD HOLD IN RESERVE FOR LATER SESSIONS YOUR PROPOSED LANGUAGE RE COLORING OF RELATIONS, OR HINTS ABOUT REMAINING DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL AND CURTAILMENT THEIR ACTIVITIES.

3. SUGGEST YOU PRESENT YOUR POINTS AS FORM OF ANALYSIS ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

-- USG IS COUNTING ON LEBANON TO PROVIDE SECURITY FOR ITS DIPLOMATS AND BELIEVES WE HAVE A RIGHT TO EXPECT A MAXIMUM GOL EFFORT TO SECURE THEIR RETURN NOW, WHEN SECURITY CONDITIONS HAVE IMPROVED SO MARKEDLY.

-- THE CONTINUING INABILITY TO WIN RELEASE OF THE TWO MEN, AND THE ABSENCE OF ANY SOLID EVIDENCE THEY ARE WELL, ARE CAUSING THE USG ACUTE CONCERN.

-- THE ABSENCE OF PROGRESS IS BOUND TO ATTRACT MORE AND MORE INQUIRIES FROM THE PRESS. WE DOUBT THAT PUBLICITY ON THE MATTER CAN BE HELD BACK MUCH LONGER, DESPITE OUR EFFORTS TO COOPERATE WITH THE JUDGMENTS OF LEBANESE AUTHORITIES THAT PUBLICITY WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL AND SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED.

-- THE AMERICAN PUBLIC AND CONGRESS ARE RELIEVED THAT THE FIGHTING HAS ENDED. WITH THEIR TRADITIONALLY WARM, FRIENDLY FEELINGS FOR THE LEBANESE PEOPLE, AMERICANS WILL WISH LEBANON WELL AS SHE MOVES FORWARD ON THE PATH OF RECONCILIATION AND PACIFICATION. OUR ANALYSIS, HOWEVER, IS THAT THESE FEELINGS COULD CHANGE, IF THE GALLAGHER/DYKES CASE BEGINS TO ATTRACT WIDE PUBLICITY. WE THINK THAT AMERICANS GENERALLY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND HOW DETENTION OF THE TWO MEN CAN CONTINUE AFTER THIS CEASE-FIRE AND ACHIEVEMENT OF A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. SISCO

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